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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/07/2016
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [IS](#) [LE](#) [JO](#)
SUBJECT: REACTIONS TO SEPTEMBER 4 AMMAN SHOOTINGS

REF: A) AMMAN 6824 B) AMMAN 6838

Classified By: Ambassador David Hale for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (SBU) Jordanians of all political tendencies joined the GOJ in condemning the September 4 shooting in Amman (ref A), which killed one Briton and injured five other tourists and a Jordanian policeman. From King Abdullah to Muslim Brotherhood leader Salem Al-Falahat, Jordans speaking out on the incident have condemned it without exception.

¶2. (SBU) Extensive media coverage characterized the attack as an isolated incident, and highlighted the "heroism" of bystanders (both Jordanian and Iraqi) who subdued the gunman until authorities arrived on the scene. Other passers-by and shopkeepers helped care for the victims. Media gave prominent play to visits the King and Prime Minister paid to the hospitalized tourists. Opinion pieces have uniformly condemned the attack (ref B). Even "Al-Arab Al-Yawm," a populist, widely-read, anti-U.S. daily, argued in an opinion column that "the honorable resistance in Lebanon has already provided the model for ethical confrontation with the enemy. Targeting innocent people is nothing but cowardly and terrorist" (ref B).

¶3. (SBU) Immediately after the incident, early official statements and government media reports referred to "terrorism." These have since been replaced in official channels by descriptions of the incident as a "criminal act" as the GOJ tries to limit the public relations damage for Jordan's tourist industry. British Embassy officials tell us their public statements are taking a similar approach.

¶4. (C) Comment: Although emotions are still raw over events in Lebanon and the Palestinian territories, the Jordanian mainstream continues to condemn retaliation against innocents, especially inside Jordan. No doubt there are fringe elements who would justify the attack, but they are keeping quiet. End Comment.

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